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ABSTRACT

During 1974-75, enrollment in the Metropolitan Community Colleges (MCC) (Kansas City, Missouri) increased from 10,589 to more than 21,000 full- and part-time students. The Metropolitan Institute of Community Services (a college without walls) expanded from serving fewer than 2,000 students in 1973-74 to more than 16,000 in 1974-75. From MCC's beginnings in 1915 as the Polytechnic Institute to today's multi-college system, MCC has served more than 200,000 persons in the Kansas City community. This document reports the District's progress in meeting 28 two-year priorities set by the Chancellor's Cabinet in 1974. Special attention is paid to progress in developing a ten-year Master Plan for the District; progress in developing a staff development program; in recoding District policies, regulations, and procedures; in conducting an educational needs assessment; and in expanding access to the District's programs. The document ends with a projection of future District needs and plans, and an appeal for a united drive to pass a $59.5 million bond issue in fall 1976. (Author/NHM)

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THE STATE OF THE DISTRICT
"Building for a Second Sixty Years of Quality Education"

presented by

Dr. Ervin L. Harlacher
Chancellor
The Metropolitan Community Colleges

at

The Sheraton Royal Hotel
Kansas City, Missouri
August 21, 1975

I was tempted to describe the academic year just ended as a banner year; but I thought that I would reserve that rather expansive and somewhat fulsome adjective for our bicentennial year--after the bond issue is passed!

Nevertheless, 1974-75 was a remarkable year of goal setting, unprecedented growth and expanded access. Carol Van Alstyne, economist for the American Council on Education, might have had our community college system in mind when she said:

> "If the first step into the future is to limit our own horizons, to scale down our expectations, to narrow our choices to feasible but pinched alternatives, we will have taken a responsible course. But there is a more fully responsible course, toward a grander vision, truer to our own beliefs in the value of higher education. Higher education must be accessible to all who can benefit from it."

We have done both--we have made the hard choices and have identified our priorities and yet have moved rapidly toward full achievement of our mission of educational accessibility for all. In one year, enrollment in the Metropolitan Community Colleges increased from 10,589 to more than 21,000 full-time and part-time students. The Metropolitan Institute of Community Services expanded from serving less than 2,000

JC 760 343

individuals to more than 16,000 in less than one year. In the six years that the District has operated Longview, Maple Woods, and Penn Valley, headcount enrollment has climbed from 6,768 to 13,380 in the spring of 1975--an average annual increase of 16.2 percent! Only five years ago the total District graduated just 349 students, but in 1975, we graduated 1,464--an increase of almost 320 percent. And in the last two years alone more than 85,000 residents and 52 community agencies were served by our community colleges. Yes, I think you will agree that it's significant that the Metropolitan Community Colleges have reached in the past 24 months--directly or indirectly with their programs--approximately one-sixth of the District population.

From our beginnings in 1915 as the Polytechnic Institute, to today's multi-college system, we have served more than 200,000 persons in the Kansas City community. This fall as we prepare to serve almost 30,000 full-time and part-time students in our three existing colleges and the college without walls (almost a 300 percent increase in two years), we are mindful of the fact that we are the oldest and clearly the largest system of higher education in the metropolitan area. In a way that makes us something of a public utility--a public utility that is accessible to all and has as its mission, serving the needs of its clients.

As Chancellor of the Metropolitan Community Colleges, I feel responsible--personally responsible--to each of you, and our constituents--to ensure that MCC continues in the tradition of excellence for which it has been known for the past 60 years. It is for that reason--to continue our greatness--that we have planned for the future and have established our priorities.

Last August the Chancellor's Cabinet approved 28 two-year District-wide priorities. These were the benchmarks against which we were going to measure our progress over

the two years. I would like to report to you where we stand at the half-way point in meeting those priorities, and I believe you will agree with me that working together, we have made significant progress. Some of these priorities I want to elaborate on, but first, let me quickly run through the list:

1. Affirmative Action - We developed a unique plan based on the two-part goal, that:

   (1) In the employment and promotion of qualified faculty, staff, and administrators, all units of the District would reflect the ethnic and sexual composition of the metropolitan Kansas City work force:

   And then we went even further and sa[illegible]

   (2) In the recruitment of students, the ethnic and sexual composition of the metropolitan Kansas City area would be reflected in the student bodies of our colleges.

   We intend to achieve this goal, not just because it's the law, but because it's right--because we believe it will produce the proper environment for learning.

2. Expanded Access - Our enrollments are increasing dramatically, and we utilized last year 111 locations throughout the District other than the college campuses for our community services programs and activities.

3. State Aid - We, through the excellent work of Mel Aytes, successfully passed our increased state aid legislation.

4. District Identity - We now have "The Metropolitan Community Colleges" as a rapidly accepted system name which ties all of our colleges together.

5. Staff Development - For the first time, the budget has set aside money for program and staff development. Not as much as we would have liked, but at least the concept has been approved by the Board.

6. Master Plan - A comprehensive ten-year Master Plan was completed, largely in-house, and adopted by the Board.

7. Fourth College Study - This study, part of the Master Plan, was completed, discussed, amended and approved by the Board.

8. Television - For the first time, the District offered open-air broadcasting of television instruction with great success.

9. Community Involvement - More community advisory committees have been developed and extensive community use of facilities, community breakfasts and luncheons, service club memberships, and other activities have moved us in the right direction.

10. Internal Communications - Internal communication devices such as INFO, Administrative Advisor, THE and Bulletin to the Board are now distributed periodically.

11. Funds Development - A dramatic increase in federal support of the District was shown this year. The state and federal governments saw fit to subsidize our efforts in the amount of $3,550,108--more than $1 million over what we were granted the preceding year.

12. Staff Retirement - A staff retirement bill was passed by the legislature and signed by the governor.

13. Security Systems - Additional security systems have been installed and security personnel upgraded, including three men commissioned as college police officers under legislation we initiated.

14. Staff Classification Study - A study was completed by an outside consultant and its recommendations are being studied for implementation in 1976-77.

15. Revision of Job Descriptions - All positions now have current job descriptions.

16. Decentralization of Media - This effort has been completed.

17. Maintenance and Operations - The first step in centralized and effective maintenance and operations systems has been implemented.

18. Board Policies, Regulations and Procedures - Complete recodification of all District policies, regulations and procedures has taken place, and college regulations and procedures have been developed.

19. Student Recruitment - An organized effort has been made for the first time in student recruitment, including extensive publicity and advertising in all media.

20. Fee Structure - The fee structure was revised with recommended modest increases approved by the Board.

21. Shared Governance - The Chancellor's Cabinet has been expanded to include faculty, staff, and student representation, as well as more open communications with both the District Academic Senate and Staff Council.

22. Bond Issue - As we all know, we are in the middle of a very important $59.5 million bond campaign.

Additional priorities which were established at the same time as those which I have just gone through remain to be completed:

1. Complete development of management systems.
2. More intensive research into student placement and followup.
3. The continued development of fiscal systems.
4. The evaluation and audit of the goals as outlined in the Master Plan.
5. Continued exploration of instructional alternatives, even though significant progress has already been made by the colleges.
6. Commencement of the completion of the college facilities program.
7. Implementation of a consortium with the two Kansas community colleges with initial emphasis on television.
8. Additional techniques for ensuring meaningful expanded access.
9. Implementation of the Fourth College.
10. Expansion of the District to serve all of the four-county area.
11. Efforts to fund the new state aid bill at $20 credit hour.
12. Expansion of our two-year career programs in addition to the strengthening of our quality transfer programs (e.g. Special Agreement with UMKC)

While there are other priorities which could be listed for the second half of this two-year effort, these will give you some idea of where we need to place increased efforts during the current year, in addition to those priorities previously cited.

Let's turn now to examine more closely some of these priorities.

I suppose we might call 1974-75 "The Year of the Plan", for it was then that we developed together a ten-year Master Plan for the District. This was a most important undertaking, and the Board's approval of the final draft was most gratifying. It's not only a good plan, in my judgment it's the best ever undertaken in the community college field. As you may recall, in last year's State of the District message, I remarked that "the simplest thing to do would be to call in outside consultants who would produce an erudite document telling us what their solutions to our problems would be." Well, we didn't follow the simplest course. Working together, we produced our own plan at a saving in cost and considerable enrichment to our understanding of who we are, where we want to go, and how we plan to get there. Together, we agreed on District philosophy and goals, which give direction to our endeavors. We established curriculum goals; we examined enrollment trends and their relationship to the need for more adequate facilities. We developed a formula for fiscal planning and staffing that produced a balanced budget through 1985 and a facilities plan which calls for the completion of our three colleges. (More about that later.) And we streamlined our organization and management systems. We realize, of course, that the Master Plan will need to be updated on an annual basis, but that should not be difficult in view of the excellence of the original document.

Certainly, the list of accomplishments this past year is significant and can be directly attributed to the quality of the trustees, faculty, staff and administrators that we are so fortunate to have in this District. It is especially clear to me, as I conclude my summer series of individual campus conferences with the students, faculty, staff and administrators, and enter my third year of service to MCC, that the teamwork, the enthusiasm, the energy, the excellence and the dedication of the people who work in

this District are unsurpassed by any other group that I have known before. That's what makes us one of the most outstanding educational systems in the country!

This suggests the staff development priority. In addition to the establishment of the special fund, accomplishments included written personnel policies, regulations and procedures; expanded fringe benefits; improved minimum, maximum and average salaries; and, over a two-year period, as a result of first year improvements and a second year automatic cost of living increase, current salary schedules for all personnel that are highly competitive with other comparable institutions.

The recodification of the District's policies, regulations and procedures allowed us, in addition to the careful examination of our personnel policies, to review instruction and curriculum guidelines and processes; to delineate between District and college level decision making; and to establish consistent systems for management procedures. This effort, which took nine months and involved the District Academic Senate and Staff Council, faculty and staff associations, faculty, administrators, and Board of Trustees, has provided us with a sound and comprehensive set of operational guidelines for management of the District during the coming years.

In the course of putting the Master Plan together, an educational needs assessment was made of the District, which showed considerable interest among our constituents in televised courses. And so, for the first time, the District offered courses by television, including a televised G.E.D. program. This highly successful undertaking provided another means of expanding access to post-secondary education, a prime priority for the year!

I am particularly gratified by the increased number of courses offered on all three college campuses, by the success of our experimental five summer sessions, by the increased

activity in community education, and by the readily apparent success of weekend and off-campus extension centers. On one campus, for example, enrollment in its weekend college was up 73.5 percent over last year. And headcount enrollment for summer sessions was up 58 percent in the District.

Continued expanded access will be a major priority for the year now under way, as will implementation and operation of the Fourth College and completion of a computer assisted fiscal management system. But our most immediate concern, and certainly our top priority, is passage of the bond issue, which will allow us to complete the job we started. Our students are entitled to adequate facilities, which they do not now enjoy, especially at the two suburban colleges. In view of the state of the economy, it took a good deal of soul searching to launch the bond drive at this particular time; but it was all too apparent that we could not wait. The need to replace the temporary facilities at Longview and Maple Woods is critical. Longview, for instance, is already 400 FTE over capacity by WICHE standards. Maple Woods is close to the saturation point. Penn Valley vitally needs its second phase construction program if it is to operate at maximum effectiveness. And, with projections indicating that District-wide enrollments will surge again this year, these statistics, coupled with MCC's mission of educational accessibility for all, are even more sharply demanding of attention when we look at projected enrollment figures.

Enrollment estimates for 1985, less than ten years away, call for more than 28,000 students in our three existing colleges. In addition, by 1985, enrollments in non-traditional education programs are estimated at between 60,000 and 100,000.

The proposed building program for Longview, Maple Woods, and Penn Valley will complete facilities for projected 1981-82 enrollments of almost 21,000. Studies showed

that to build to the 1985 projections would cost in excess of $130 million--a prohibitive figure. However, by building to the 1981-82 enrollment figures, and instituting the Fourth College, the existing colleges could be completed and equipped for less than $60 million.

Before we recommended to the Board of Trustees that it adopt a resolution authorizing a $59.5 million special election on October 21 to secure voter approval of general obligation bonds to complete the District's college construction program, we had several studies made to provide the basis for action. These studies supported Longview's claim of current need for additional space. They also indicated that Maple Woods and Penn Valley will require additional space by 1978. Enrollment projections for the three colleges indicate that, by 1981-82, Longview will be serving 7,500 students; Maple Woods, 4,500; and Penn Valley, 8,500. After 1981-82, the Fourth College--the college without walls--will clearly come to the rescue. Operating expanded off-campus programs and services, it will be able to absorb those students for whom space is not available at the three colleges.

The bond monies will be used in the following ways: $55,600,000 will be set aside for completion of Longview, Maple Woods, and Penn Valley community colleges to 1981-82 enrollment projections; $3,400,000 will be set aside to meet ten year needs for instructional equipment and building modification. And $500,000 will be set aside for modifications in District energy systems to effect savings in operational costs.

Just what will be built? Each of the colleges will be completed with fully equipped classrooms and laboratories, including physical education facilities. The estimated cost to complete facilities for Longview is approximately $24 million. Maple Woods will

require $15 million to complete its campus, and Penn Valley will receive $14 million for Phase Two construction.

If we are to accomplish this, though, more concerted action will be required on the part of all of us than ever before. This is a total District project and therefore devoid of any rivalry. Each college knows its facility needs, and it knows that these cannot be met without funds. And, since each is a "people's college," it seems not inconsistent to ask the people, you and our clientele, for their help. And keep in mind that it's not going to cost anyone in the greater Kansas City area an arm and a leg. Based on an average tax increase of 20¢ per $100 of assessed evaluation, the average tax bill will be increased by only $12.00 per year or $1.00 per month. Surely, this is not an exorbitant price to pay for continuing the quality education this District has provided metropolitan Kansas City over the past sixty years!

And the bond issue will not mean an additional increase in the tax levy for college operations. Nor will the bond money be used to finance the Fourth College--the college without walls will operate largely in free and leased facilities throughout the community. Through its non-traditional delivery systems, it will negate the need for additional permanent facilities by the colleges in the foreseeable future.

It may be a cliche, but we need your help! We need your help in achieving the one priority which is so important to all of us and our students!

Despite the help we will receive from interested community groups, your help is indispensable--your help can make certain that we receive that required two-thirds approval. For example, you can help us with community people in their understanding of the advantages that will accrue to them and their children from an affirmative vote

on the bond issue. They need to know the buildings will be accessible not only for academic purposes, but for community activities as well. They need to know that completion of the buildings will facilitate reaching the District's ninth goal; namely, "to cooperate with, coordinate, and stimulate the work of various agencies and groups in offering diversified cultural and social opportunities to the community it serves." They need to know, as you already know--that completion of our colleges is vital for the continuance of quality community college education in the metropolitan Kansas City area.

So I urge each of you to give the October bond election "1000 percent," to coin a phrase! Persuade your relatives, your friends, your neighbors, the butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker--everyone you know--to go to the polls on October 21 and vote yes.

And we must remember! Every vote is critical on October 21--because of that required two-thirds majority. Our goal is to get no less than 40,000 yes voters pledged and to the polls on election day. (We already have more than 4,500 yes vote cards in hand.) For with 40,000 voters saying yes, the entire metropolitan area comes up a winner.

I suppose you have noticed that we have adopted (a polite word for stolen) from Longview our system's motto: "Community is our Middle Name." Well, it is. We just weren't quick enough to coin the motto ourselves. Anyhow, we're using it. We believe in it. We're sure you do, too. We all want to provide students with efficient classrooms and laboratories. We want the faculty, staff and students to have an environment conducive to learning. We all want our colleges to be a place where faculty and students want to come together to participate in teaching/learning process. We all want the

community to realize that the Metropolitan Community Colleges are here to serve it, because the community's support of its community colleges will not accrue totally to the colleges; it will also accrue to the community. Tell our story. Let it be broadcast through America's heartland that we are building for a second sixty years of quality education.

Those of you who participated in the Master Plan charrette will remember the story told by Max Tadlock, which is taken from the Talmud. I believe this is a good way to end . . . and begin.

Once there was a wise and prescient rabbi, noted far and wide for his ability to foretell the future. And there was a rabbinical student, a young skeptic who chose to test the wise rabbi and said to himself: "I shall go into the wilderness and catch a small bird which I can conceal in my hand, and I will approach the rabbi in a public place and say to him, 'O wise rabbi, they tell me you know tomorrow. Tell me, is the bird in my hand alive or dead?' And if he says the bird is dead, I shall open my hand and the bird will fly away. And if he says the bird is alive, my knuckles will whiten slightly and I will open my hand to show him the dead bird."

And then the rabbinical student did as he had planned. He went into the wilderness where he caught a small bird he could conceal in his hand, and he sought the rabbi out in a public place, and he approached him and said:

"O wise one, they say that you can foretell tomorrow, that you know the truths of the future. Tell me, have I in my hand a live or a dead bird?"

And the wise rabbi looked at him long and slow and steadily and said in a quiet voice, "As you will, my son. As you will."

And so it is with our bond election! The outcome is up to us! As we will! As we will!

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